

Message Text

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67

ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 USIA-12

AID-20 PC-04 EB-11 SIL-01 LAB-06 RSR-01 /125 W

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R 152355 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9115

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 1225

FOR: LAZAR FROM AMBASSADOR

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT

SUBJECT: REGIONAL AIFLD PROGRAM: SUAZO/ CTF CONFLICT

REF: LAZAR- BOWDLER TELECON MARCH 14

1. APPRECIATE YOUR BRINGING TO MY ATTENTION CTF ATTITUDE TOWARD SUAZO. CTF LETTER TO AIFLD/ W, RE REGIONAL PROGRAM DIRECTOR SUAZO REFLECTS CONTINUING STRUGGLE BY CTF LEADERSHIP TO DOMINATE ALL OF AIFLD ACTIVITIES IN GUATEMALA, AS WELL AS TO INCREASE ITS SHARE OF CONTROL OF REGIONAL LABOR CONFEDERATION (CTCA). IN PAST YEAR CTF SUCCEEDED IN EXTRACTING FROM ITS FELLOW CTCA MEMBERS CONCESSION OF PERMANENT HEADQUARTERS LOCATED IN GUATEMALA, PLUS APPOINTMENT OF GUATEMALAN (JULIO SUAREZ SANTIZO) AS EXEC DIRECTOR OF CTCA. THIS WAS DONE UNDER THREAT OF WITHDRAWING FROM REGIONAL ORGANIZATION. PRESENT CONFLICT, AND ABUSIVE LETTER WITH RESPECT TO SUAZO (GUATEMALA CPD RECEIVED SIMILAR LETTER IN PAST) IS DIRECT RESULT OF CTF ATTEMPT TO APPOINT GUATEMALAN (MARIO CASTILLO PARADA) TO ANOTHER, RECENTLY- ESTABLISHED ADMINISTRATIVE POST IN IESCA (EDUCATION COORDINATOR). CONFRONTATION IS ESSENTIALLY BETWEEN CTF AND HONDURAN LABOR MOVEMENT (SINCE CTCA' S HONDURAN SECRETARY GENERAL, VICTOR ARTILES, NAMED FELLOW HONDURAN TO NEW POST) WITH SUAZO
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CAUGHT IN BETWEEN. WHILE WE BELIEVE ARTILES COULD HAVE HANDLED SITUATION IN MORE DELICATE FASHION, MATTER IS FOR CTCA EXEC BOARD TO RESOLVE. NEXT MTG IS SCHEDULED FOR CUERNAVACA IN APRIL.

2. IN DISPUTE OVER EDUCATION COORDINATOR POST, CTF SOUGHT TO PRESSURE SUAZO TO RESCIND APPOINTMENT OF CTCA SEC GEN AND PUT CASTILLO IN JOB, OR HIRE BOTH INDIVIDUALS. SUAZO REFUSED, BASING DECISION ON GROUNDS THAT HE HAD NO AUTHORITY TO INTERVENE IN CTCA MATTERS AND THAT ISSUE HAD TO BE RESOLVED BY EXEC BOARD. HE THUS INCURRED WRATH OF ARTURO MORALES CUBAS, CTF'S TOP LEADER. MORALES TOOK EXTREME STEP OF THREATENING TO TERMINATE CTF/ AIFLD RELATIONS IF AIFLD DID NOT REMOVE SUAZO AND IS NOW IN PROCESS OF BOYCOTTING IESCA ACTIVITIES AS WELL AS SEEKING SUPPORT FOR THIS POSITION FROM OTHER LA LABOR FEDERATIONS. THIS TACTIC IS AN OLD ONE FOR MORALES, WHO BELIEVES HE GOT GUATEMALA COUNTRY PROGRAM DIRECTOR REMOVED IN MID- 1971 FOR NOT BEING SUBMISSIVE TO MORALES' AUTHORITY.

3. WHEN MORALES SETS HIS SIGHTS ON GOAL- AS HE HAS GREATER CONTROL OF CTCA AND REGIONAL AIFLD PROGRAM- AND FAILS, HE OFTEN RESORTS TO EXTREME CONFRONTATION TACTICS. THE ABUSIVE LANGUAGE IN LETTER ON SUAZO IS NOT THE FIRST TIME THIS HAS HAPPENED.

4. I HAVE DISCUSSED THIS ISSUE WITH ROCAP DIRECTOR. WE HAVE AGREED THAT SUAZO TRANSFER SHOULD REMAIN AS SCHEDULED FOR O/ A AUGUST 1. AN EARLIER DEPARTURE WOULD APPEAR TO BE BOWING TO CTF PRESSURE AND WOULD, IN TURN, CAST DOUBT ON REGIONAL CHARACTER OF AIFLD RELATIONSHIP WITH CTCA. ALSO, LIFE WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR HIS REPLACEMENT. INDEED, MORALES MADE UNCONDITIONAL DEMAND FOR SUAZO'S REMOVAL WITH KNOWLEDGE THAT HE WOULD LEAVE SOON ANYWAY. MORALES MAY HAVE HOPED TO CONSTRUE SUAZO'S DEPARTURE AS A GREAT VICTORY.

5. FROM PAST EXPERIENCE, I DO NOT THINK WE SHOULD ALLOW OURSELVES TO BE INTIMIDATED BY MORALES CUBAS. HONDURAN LABOR MOVEMENT-- NOT CTF-- IS MAINSTAY OF CTCA. HE KNOWS THAT OUR ASSISTANCE IS IMPORTANT TO HIS OPERATIONS
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AND PUBLIC ATTACK ON SUAZO COULD PREJUDICE CONTINUED

ASSISTANCE. HOWEVER, IN EFFORT TO HEAD OFF PRECIPITOUS
ACTION BY HIM, I PLAN TO MEET WITH HIM IN NEAR FUTURE
AS PART OF EMBASSY'S ROUND OF CONTACTS WITH
GUATEMALAN LEADERS. I WILL USE OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS
SUAZO CASE AND DELICATELY SUGGEST THAT IT IS TO NO ONE'S
INTEREST TO ALLOW PRESENT DIFFERENCES TO INTERFERE WITH
PRESENT MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL COOPERATION BETWEEN CTF,
CTCA AND AIFLD. IN THE MEANTIME, ROCAP WILL CONTINUE TO
PRESS FOR A SOLUTION THROUGH VICTOR ARTILES AND CTCA
EXECUTIVE BOARD.
BOWDLER

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